

# Forest Characters

## TEACHER PAGE

Directions: Print out the cards double-sided, with pictures on one side and text on the other. Cut apart.

### S.T. – The Short-tailed Shrew



Short-tailed shrews live throughout the eastern United States.



### Sitta – The Nuthatch



Nuthatches are tree-climbing birds. Some nuthatch species have a black “cap” on their heads.



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## Shrews:

- Are small—but fierce—mammals about the size of a mouse.
- Have a long nose and sharp, pointy teeth.
- Can attack and kill prey much bigger than them. Their teeth contain venom!
- Mostly eat insects like beetles, grasshoppers, or wasps, but can also eat small birds and snakes.
- Live in and under moist soil covered with dead leaves in forests, grasslands, and other habitats.



## Nuthatches:

- Have large heads and short tails and legs.
- Eat insects hidden in the bark of tree trunks and limbs. They also like large seeds and nuts.
- Are very active and quite agile. They can climb both up and down tree trunks, head first!
- Are noisy. They make a variety of whistles, trills, and calls.
- Live in forests and woodlands throughout North America.



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## Millie – The Millipede



Millipedes are small animals with many legs. Their name comes from the Latin words *mille* ("thousand") and *pes* ("foot").

## The Earthworm




Earthworms tunnel in soil, creating space for air and water to enter.


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## Millipedes:

- Are long, slow-moving animals that live on the forest floor.
  - Have 30 or more pairs of legs. Despite their name, no one has ever found one with 1,000 legs!
  - Have hard bodies made of lots of rings, or segments. Each segment has two pairs of legs.
  - Are vegetarians that eat decaying leaves and other dead plant matter.
  - Tunnel in soil. They may be found under bark, stones, or old wood, or in damp compost.
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## Earthworms:

- Usually are a few inches long, but some species can grow up to 14 inches.
  - Breathe through their skin and must stay moist or they will suffocate.
  - Live in soil and in moist leaves that have fallen to the ground.
  - Eat soil! Their food is decaying plant and animal matter, and the bacteria and fungi found in the soil.
  - Move nutrients and minerals from deep in the soil to the surface, helping to create healthy soil.
  - Can be found in forests and many other habitats.
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## The White Grub



White grubs are the larvae of different species of scarab beetles.



## The Black Beetle



Black beetle is the common name for over 2,200 species of beetles found in North America.



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## White grubs:

- Are creamy white in color. They are also partly transparent, so you can see right into their gut!
- Lie on their side in a C-shaped position when resting.
- May live one or more years under the soil before becoming adult beetles.
- Eat dead plant and animal matter in forests and other habitats.
- Some species eat plant roots and can damage farm crops and garden plants.



## Black beetles:

- Are insects with a tough body and powerful jaws.
- Cannot fly but can climb and run quite fast.
- Like to live in moist environments and under leaves, logs, and stones.
- Are predators! They hunt and eat caterpillars, slugs, worms, and even other beetles.
- Can be found living in forests and many other habitats.

